The Highlander

Thursday **March 26 2026** | Issue 732

INSIDE: U-LINKS SCIENCE CELEBRATION COMES TO LEGION PAGE 14 **FREE**

Slippin' and Slidin'

Blake McLean, Braydon and Hazel Mitchell enjoyed themselves after hitting the toboggan hill at Glebe Park last Saturday (March 21). *Photo by Adam Frisk.*

Virtual ER training comes to Haliburton

By Lisa Gervais

Haliburton County residents and visitors can feel more confident if they have to go to the emergency department (ED) thanks to a new virtual simulation training program.

Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS), in partnership with the Lakeridge Health Education and Research Network (LHEARN), have announced the launch of a groundbreaking emergency department virtual simulation education program.

Full-time ED doctor, Harrison Bishop, inspired the concept. He told *The Highlander* it came about serendipitously.

Living in Cobourg at the time, his daughter was playing in the park with the daughter of neighbour, Dr. Adam Dubrowski, who is the professor and Canada research chair in healthcare simulation at Ontario Tech University.

Medical simulation isn't new; however, it is centralized in larger cities in the province. There is an educator who works in a central booth, often behind glass, who guides health-care professionals in hubs around the core. They may be working on dummies or mannequins. Sometimes there is outreach with mobile vehicles.

Dr. Bishop asked Dr. Dubrowski at the park if he knew of a program where the technologist is centralized and they feed the signal to rural sites over the internet. The answer was no. They talked to Dr. Randy Wax at LHEARN.

Continued **'Program'** on page 2

Highlander news

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Dr. Harrison Bishop with some of the virtual simulation program equipment. *Photo by Lisa Gervais.*

Program enhancing care for our communities

Continued from page 1

"Essentially, that's where the concept of it came from; it was simply out of a need or a void," Dr. Bishop said.

Dr. Dubrowski is internationally recognized for advancing simulation-based health-care training. His research, leadership and collaborative work have been instrumental in bringing the virtual simulation model to life, HHHS said.

Dr. Bishop explained how it works. For example, the centralized operator could tell the doctor and nurse over an internet feed that they have a 65-year-old man who has fallen through the ice and is vital signs absent. The team works on a dummy, or mannequin, to try to resuscitate. Interventions are monitored. Then feedback is given after the fact.

"You essentially are practicing high-risk or high acuity scenarios without the risk of somebody dying," Dr. Bishop said.

Again, he said the technology isn't new. "The innovative part is about how to get the technology to rural sites."

Local advantages

He said there are many advantages for Haliburton County-based ED physicians.

Doctors could access the training in the past but had to travel out-of-town for it. And, it was just for the doctor, not the medical team. Now, they can all learn on-site.

"So, it's multidisciplinary. And, then, you also have input; being able to work with scenarios you see where you work, rather than just going down there and seeing whatever ones they give you."

For example, winter emergencies such as people falling through the ice or snowmobile accidents. In summer, trouble cottagers might get into, water-based accidents and injuries, or mishaps in the bush.

Dr. Bishop said they did a wet run – to make sure the connection and feed worked - in December and staff are now signing up for spring training.

He said with only two full-time ED doctors, it helps others who don't see emergency situations as often.

"Like any high-stress scenario, you need to have a little bit of muscle memory … what works? so that level of anxiety or stress is just a little bit lower."

He added, "the really great resuscitation physicians and nurses and team could train on a rag doll and it will still be just as useful because it's about decision-making and teamwork and communication, not about a single procedure."

He said it's still early days, but the feedback is good, especially with doctors and nurses suggesting scenarios. He noted they don't get paid for the extra training, which is on top of their already busy schedules, but they want to give the community the best medicine they can.

"Haliburton's got a really great team of professionals. They know it's important to be as good as they can be for when people have emergencies."

Dr. Bishop added there's no reason the virtual simulation program cannot expand across Ontario, Canada, and internationally. "Anywhere that you can get an internet connection … Bancroft, Barry's Bay, Mindemoya, the Northern Territories, Rwanda or Sudan. There's no reason why any of these people should not have access to virtual simulation-based training when you can just do it with a webcam."

HHHS said it "looks forward to evaluating its impact and exploring future expansion opportunities."

What the HALIBURTON PODCAST

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THIS WEEK:
Minding the Gap: Youth and Family Services

Dysart hires consultants for County Road 21 build

By Mike Baker

Dysart et al mayor Murray Fearrey said the township is progressing with plans to develop its 92-acre property on County Road 21 (CR21) but warned it could be 2028 before anything is built.

Council discussed the file again at a March 24 meeting, signing off on a $310,000 spend to hire two Toronto-based consultants to serve as project managers. Biglieri Group and MTE Consulting submitted a joint bid to the township, one of three received, to oversee the first phase of development.

Fearrey said Biglieri will handle the planning files with MTE running point on engineering.

Up to now, the project has been led by County-based property developer Paul Wilson, who once owned the land. He sold it to realtor Andrew Hodgson in 2022 before the township bought it for $1.725 million in July 2023.

Wilson indicated last fall the project was too big for him to handle alone and recommended the township secure a project manager. While Fearrey was surprised by the cost, he felt Dysart had no choice but to proceed.

"We can't do some of this stuff internally and we need to move forward to attract the kind of projects we need. We need a solid plan and to know exactly all the services and studies required before anything can be built," Fearrey said.

The parcel has been split into 26 lots. Last fall, the township indicated one of those would be held for a new recreation centre, four for a potential long-term care facility and the rest for residential development. There's also space for a public park and commercial units fronting CR21.

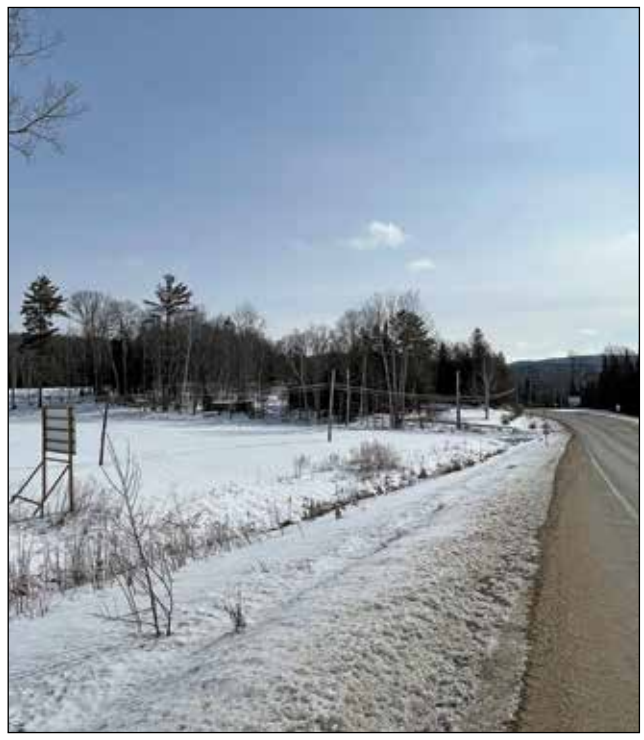
The mayor said the township remained committed to funding future technical assessments, such as traffic, environmental impact and hydrogeological studies and a stormwater management plan – documents Dysart would need to provide to the County to move ahead with an Official Plan amendment.

Money will also be needed to develop key infrastructure such as roads, sewers, hydro lines, water wells and internet. The price tag to service the lot has been pegged at $1.55 million, with Dysart council last year approving a plan to raise $3 million through community bonds. No program has yet been made public.

Despite the substantial cost, Fearrey feels the project is a good one for the township. Asked if he thought Dysart would recoup its outlay, the mayor believes they will.

"Doing all of this increases the price of the lots and basically guarantees development [will happen]. The lot prices will, in my view, double if the services are there," Fearrey said. "It's still a viable project for the township and one that's badly needed.

"I want us to get this in a position with this council [to make sure] it goes ahead. I really don't want to see this thing sidelined. We're in tough economic times now and markets are not good, but they will return. Whether it's a year or two years, I want us to be in a position to take advantage when they do rebound," the mayor added.



Dysart et al has hired two Toronto-based firms to serve as project managers for the first phase of development of its 92-acre property on County Road 21. *File.*

The mayor says the land could one day house up to 100 housing units, with some of the lots slated for multi-residential.

"This is probably going to create 100 jobs when work begins on the construction side. That's what we're projecting. That's a lot of money for our economy in Haliburton," Fearrey said. "Then we'll have the taxes coming in from what goes in there, the sewage rates. This will be a big win for the community. But we've got to get the foundation in place first."

Negotiations with a "major" long-term care provider are still ongoing, Fearrey said. Last fall, it was confirmed Extendicare held an interest in the property. It was four years ago, February 2022, when the Ontario government announced it had approved a new 128-bed Extendicare facility had been approved for Haliburton County.

The for-profit long-term care provider has yet to formally commit to a location.

Awakening

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BY BARBARA HART
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A sledder is pictured heading out on Head Lake after visiting Haliburton village. *Photo by Adam Frisk.*

Snowmobile association celebrates 'excellent' season

By Adam Frisk
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

With the warmer temperatures, the melting snow, and residents trading their sleds for sap buckets, local officials and businesses are looking back on an "excellent" snowmobile season.

Despite battling fallen trees and some grueling equipment repairs, the Haliburton County Snowmobile Association (HCSA) said the trails saw high traffic, an increase in pass sales, and a boost to the local economy.

"Well, it started with trees down, and it ends up with trees down, but the verdict is it was an excellent season," Neil Vanderstoop, HCSA president, told *The Highlander*.

The season got off to an uncommonly early start in mid-December, but the harsh winter temperatures put heavy strain on the association's machinery mid-season.

"The challenges this year with grooming were keeping the equipment together when it got to those extreme temperatures," Vanderstoop said. "Silly stuff like hydraulic lines and wheel bearings (failing)."

The president credited the association's mechanic for working around the clock to keep things moving, often turning repairs around in hours rather than days.

The early start to the season translated to busier dining rooms. Over at Kosy Korner in Haliburton Village, the influx of early sledders was much-welcomed and was a vital part of the winter economy.

"We definitely have an influx in our clients, specifically snowmobilers, that come on weekends and even during the week," manager Emily Keller said. "You get a slew of different varieties of ages, too."

She noted that sledders came with healthy appetites, often skipping the lighter snacks for "heartier foods" like burgers, beer, and the "Eye-Opener" breakfast. The sledding community is known for being "good tippers" and highly loyal, Keller added.

However, while accessibility to the main strip in Haliburton was generally good, Keller highlighted one area for improvement - helping tourists find their way once they park their sleds at Head Lake Park. She said that while the regulars know the lay of the land, first-time visitors sometimes struggled finding their way to the shops and restaurants.

"A few of them had mentioned that signage at the parking area could be better... in the sense of 'Main Street this way,'" Keller explained.

County of Haliburton manager of tourism, Angelica Ingram, said the early arrival of winter and consistently cold temperatures kept sledders on the trails throughout the area.

"Unlike some of the previous winters we have had recently, it stayed consistently cold for the majority of the winter, which helped," she said. "Even with the early start sometimes we get thaws in the season that can be really tricky for snowmobilers and the club maintaining the trails. So we had the trails open most of the winter with less disruption, which was great."

Vanderstoop said HCSA remained a regional leader in trail pass sales, with a two per cent increase over the previous year. He said most of the sales were seasonal passes, indicating a dedicated, recurring rider base, but the "pass-less" rider was a concern.

"The lack of passes was an issue this year," the president said. "Some guys wait until after 4 p.m. to head out... that just hurts the sport."

While the safety record was generally good, Vanderstoop pointed to speed as the root cause of complaints on the rail trail. Comparing sleds to ATVs, he explained that while dust keeps ATV speeds naturally lower, the "instant" power of a snowmobile requires more rider discipline.

The HCSA will hold its annual general meeting on May 24. The event will include the announcement of the Volunteer of the Year and a donation presentation to the Minden Urgent Care Clinic.

So, what's next for Vanderstoop?

"I'm just sitting in the garage boiling down my maple syrup," the president laughed, while offering one final piece of seasonal advice. "Don't boil sap in the garage and try to wax your truck at the same time."

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Highlander news

Public gets say in tweaking of STR rules

By Adam Frisk
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Highlands East council vows to "tweak" the municipality's controversial Short-Term Rental (STR) bylaw after a heated public meeting that exposed the conflict between the township's economic needs and its quiet lakeside character.

Elected officials heard from members of the public on March 24 who warned that the current STR licensing program is dragging down the economy, while others pleaded for protections from lakeside "party pits."

Township business owners argued that current STR regulations are already causing a declining economy. Lindsay Watling, co-owner of the Wilberforce Service Centre, told council her business saw a 30 per cent decline in revenue from June to September 2025, a drop she attributes to a lack of local hospitality.

"We simply do not have the infrastructure to support tourism through hotels alone," she said, adding that the nearest rooms are about 40 minutes away, in nearby towns. "That distance matters because when visitors cannot stay here, they don't sleep here, and when they don't sleep here, they don't spend their money here; they spend it elsewhere."

Watling went on to note a potential safety concern surrounding the lack of hospitality in the township and pointed to the recent ice storm as an example. She said that emergency hydro crews were forced to commute up to five hours daily from as far away as Kingston because local STRs were unavailable.

"This is a valuable time that could have been spent restoring power to our residents," the business owner said. "Just a few years ago, many of those same crews were able to stay locally at short-term rentals."

While business owners pleaded for growth, lake association leaders voiced concerns over the lack of STR limits on lakes, the apparent lack of enforcement of unlicensed rentals, and party venues.

Chris Williams, president of the Minnicock Lake Cottagers Association, told council that at least one cottage had turned over three times because residents could no longer tolerate living next to a poorly managed rental.

"Essentially, it's called a party pit," he said. "They sit there every weekend and have a constant stream of parties all the time. And so they're like, 'What is the value of this property?' And they dump it.

"What it also means is that the zoning has become irrelevant. You've got businesses that are operating in residential zones," Williams said.

He went on to urge council to move faster on enforcement, suggesting that lax enforcement means low enrollment.

"Why did I pay all this money for a licence when other people are allowed to operate without one?" Williams questioned.

Some of the granular details of the bylaw were addressed during the public meeting, such as capacity limits, shore road allowances and overall privacy concerns, with one host slamming the municipality for posting an online map of STR locations without consent.

"Big, big, big privacy issues there," Elizabeth Oakley told council.

The public meeting lasted just over an hour, with mayor Dave Burton acknowledging that the 18-month-old program requires adjustments.

"We've been gathering the information. We've been compiling everything that has been spoken about today," he said. "I'm very willing to look at the bylaw. We understand that it does need a bit of tweaking, and we will certainly do that."

The mayor indicated he would request a full staff review of the public's suggestions that were presented to council.

Highlands East mayor Dave Burton says staff will conduct a review of STR regulations. *File.*

Highlander news

Dysart et al council has deferred a project to replace the Head Lake Park pedestrian footbridge. *File.*

Head Lake Park fix a bridge too far

By Mike Baker

Dysart et al council is going back to the drawing board on plans to replace the Head Lake Park pedestrian footbridge after engineers recommended against a modular design.

Elected officials initially approved the $590,000 replacement of the current arced bridge with a similar model in October 2024, but a year later directed staff to investigate installing a bailey bridge instead. Council hoped the rethink would save money, with the modular design earmarked at around $100,000.

Public works director, Rob Camelon, told council March 24 the township's engineer on the project, DM Wills Associates, found problems with the cheaper alternative.

"The in-situ soils do not have enough bearing capacity for the proposed structure… and the other part is, to maintain the headspace above the water level you would have to raise the bridge about four feet going with the modular design, which is going to impact the grading back into the park," Camelon said.

Lowering the headspace between the water and underside of the bridge, currently around six feet, could cause issues with Transport Canada, the director said. "They want to see bridges go in as good or better on headspace," Camelon said.

Coun. Pat Casey asked why that was a concern considering the stream isn't passable by boat – Camelon replied that those are the federal regulations. Casey said he had a hard time justifying the near-$600,000 spend.

Camelon said the price may be even higher now given the supplier of steel sheet and tube piling, used in the foundation, has ceased operations in Canada.

"We may go to tender and the price could come back just ridiculous and we can't afford it," Camelon said.

With the underside of the bridge heavily rusted, mayor Murray Fearrey believes it isn't safe to leave the structure in its current condition for much longer. He asked Camelon what other options the township had.

"I would say the project becomes a remove-only and we go without a bridge in the park," Camelon said.

Council deferred the replacement.

DYSART ET AL NEWS

Pounding pavement

Dysart et al's public works manager, Rob Camelon, delivered a rare piece of positive budgeting news to council this week, revealing the township's planned rehabilitation of sidewalks on Highland Street came in eight per cent under budget.

The township had planned to spend around $1million replacing the curbs, boulevard and sidewalks on the village's main strip from York Street to Maple Avenue, but the project was awarded to Four Brothers Construction for $914,625 plus HST.

The Woodville-based firm beat out D Rock Paving, who bid $510,451 but were disqualified after not following the township's bid bond process, and Total Site Services – owned by coun. Pat Casey – which bid $1.138 million.

The project will be paid off over 15 years with the township securing funding through Infrastructure Ontario, carrying a 4.23 per cent annual interest rate.

Camelon noted the work will be completed this year. *(Dysart et al briefs compiled by Mike Baker.)*

ADVERTORIAL

The gardening that looks like wandering

By Simon Payn

It was a warm July day and the meadow project I'd installed was growing tall – the sunny environment and loose soil made the plants happy as daisies.

And so I wandered. The Wild Strawberries in the groundcover layer were filling in nicely. The Silverweed was too, but it could have used a little more water – something to keep an eye on. The grasses were slow to get going, but that's normal for the time of year.

The Beebalm with its scented leaves was growing like crazy. It hadn't succumbed to mildew yet. I made a note to keep an eye on it, however – this species can be aggressive in the right environment.

The Ohio Spiderwort was doing well. It had finished flowering but its seed heads were hanging on in there. Ideal for new plants next year.

But what was that over there? It wasn't something I'd planted, I was sure about that. The plant was tall and vigorous. I got closer and saw Mugwort – an invasive that likely came in on the topsoil. That would have to go. Luckily, the loose ground made the young plant an easy pull.

And over there? And over there? And over there? Horseweed. I see it everywhere in new installations because it likes disturbed soil. It's an annual, so no need to pull it and create more disturbance and more weeds. Just lop off its head before it goes to seed.

> The decisions I make on this July visit are just as important as the decisions I made on the drawing board in March.

Designed to change

Ecological landscaping expert Larry Weaner calls stewardship an extension of the design process. Each time you decide to intervene, that intervention changes the course of the design because your decision favours some plants over others.

The skill is knowing the differences between plants – how they grow, how they propagate themselves – and exploiting those differences to keep the design going in a good direction.

Unlike the traditional model, where the goal is to get it how you want it, then hold the line and keep it there, ecological landscapes are designed to change. Pulling an aggressive plant gives less aggressive plants a chance; stopping an annual spreading its seeds helps ecological succession advance a step.

So the decisions I make on this July visit – removing invasives, keeping other plants in check – are as important as the decisions I made on the drawing board in March.

What happens during wandering

A lawn crew can keep the grass cut, but they can't decide what plant needs pulling or just trimming, or whether the Beebalm is just fine or a problem in waiting.

That's why my brief wanderings are doing more than appears. I know what should be there and what shouldn't, what's outcompeting things and what's struggling, which weeds you can leave and which must go.

I'm aware which plants are growing in June and which don't get going until August, so I know if a plant is failing or merely slow.

Most importantly, I know when not to intervene, when to allow the plants to do what plants do, however impatient I might feel.

The next summer

The next year, things were different. There was no more Mugwort and fewer Horseweed. The grasses were bigger and most of the bare patches had disappeared. There was some Yarrow I didn't install but which fitted in just fine. The Beebalm was even bigger – it might need some tending next year.

And this summer to come? As I do my slow wander, I'll see Little Bluestem swaying in the wind, hear the sound of bees in the Coreopsis, and smell warm grass under the summer sun.

Simon Payn owns Grounded, which designs, installs and cares for ecological gardens and shorelines. Visit groundedgardens.ca.

Editorial opinion

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OUR MISSION

To tell the story of Haliburton County each week.

To be a source of information and inspiration through stories and ideas.

To report on issues, people and events important to the community.

To reflect and promote pride in the culture, people and landscape of The Highlands.

To encourage Highlanders to believe in themselves, in our community, and in their power to make our place in the world better every day.

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Wins for health care

By Lisa Gervais

While many people are still smarting over the loss of the emergency department in Minden, no one can argue that having one ER site has allowed medical improvements in Haliburton County.

Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS), with the help of its foundation, and the general public, has seen a $6 million investment in the diagnostic imaging wing.

To recap; we got a CT scanner in 2024.

We were recently told that having a CT has led to a significant decrease in out-of-town ambulance trips for patients. Our ambulance service isn't taking as many people to Lindsay, Peterborough, or Bracebridge for CTs.

Between 2022-23, the number of transfers was climbing. Now, the number of trips has dropped by about 67 per cent from a 2023 peak. They're now doing about one transfer a day, down from three. That means more ambulances staying in the County for Highlands accidents and emergencies.

It also means less fuel and wear and tear on ambulances – which means our ambulances will last a little longer.

We also know that having a CT scanner has helped with physician recruitment. After years of not much action, we are starting to see more regular announcements about family doctors and ER physicians coming to Haliburton County.

The next addition was the mammography unit. Once again, it is saving women and some men from having to travel to regional hospitals for the scan. It's another game-changer.

And, just last week, the health services unveiled a new state-of-the-art X-ray suite. Moving it from its current location will also result in changes to the ER to improve patient flow, and adding a mental health room to support community members and families when they need a private space.

On March 25, County council was expected to green light the financial paperwork to bring Dr. Jeet George for a May 1 start. That's another 700 patients off the waiting list. He'll be at the Highlands Family Health Organization and working a day a week in the ER.

The team still needs three additional family physicians to bring their staffing level to a full complement, but it's come a long way.

Today, we have an exciting story about how HHHS is bringing a virtual simulation program to the hospital. Thanks to Dr. Harrison Bishop, it means doctors and nurses, and other members of the healthcare team, can train onsite for possible accident and emergency scenarios, rather than doctors having to go to larger centres for training. Ultimately, it means better patient care for all of us.

The other big news sees Jack Hutchison taking the reins as president and CEO of HHHS March 30.

Hutchison spent 11 years working with the Weeneebayko Area Health Authority, made up of a group of six Indigenous communities across the western James Bay Coast – the past three as senior vice-president and chief operating officer. In 2022, he also spent nine months as vice-president of people and culture at Headwaters Health Care Centre in Orangeville.

With the departure of former bosses Veronica Nelson and Jennifer Burns-West to Ross Memorial Hospital, Hutchison is joining a health service that has had some wins.

So, as much as we lament the loss of the Minden emergency department, we look forward to seeing what Hutchison and his team can continue to do at Haliburton hospital – our County's hospital.

RIP turn signals

By Adam Frisk

It's time to address the significant loss of something that has been with us in the County since at least the mid-1950s. No, I'm not talking about Bernstein's General Store or the Molou; I'm talking about that plastic stick usually found on the left side of the steering column. You know, that thing you flick to make a "click-click" sound?

There's either a real shortage of the fluid used to operate the mechanism, or the turn signal has become a luxury feature on vehicles in the County.

It happens in town so often. I'll be following a vehicle, minding my own business while listening to Pearl Jam on the radio, when all of a sudden, the car in front of me stops without warning. I think to myself that perhaps they are being courteous by letting someone use the crosswalk, or waiting for a fellow driver to parallel park on Highland Street. Heck, maybe it's a turtle doing turtle things! But no, usually, they're just waiting to hang a Louie into the grocery store or the Head Lake parking area.

Now, I'm generally a private person. I don't advertise where I'm going or where I've been; I don't even have location sharing enabled on my phone. When I'm leaving the house and my wife asks where I'm headed, I often simply say, "Out." But just because I enjoy my privacy doesn't mean I like to keep people guessing while I'm driving my Subaru.

When did we collectively decide that turn signals are now optional? Are there signs posted somewhere in town that read "Do Not Use Blinkers" or "You Have Entered a Turn-Signal-Optional Town"? If so, they must be right next to the "Do Not Feed the Deer" signs.

Why are people keeping their next move a secret? Are we worried we might tip off a tourist or a seasonal resident about a secret fishing hole or a never-used EV charging station? Likely not the latter, but you get my point.

Turn signals were invented for a reason. They allow other drivers to know your intentions, whether you're slowing down or planning a change of direction. According to the Ministry of Transportation, and the driver's handbook I purchased in 1996, you are supposed to use signals "before stopping, slowing down, turning, changing lanes, leaving the road, or moving out from a parked position." Oh, and this is supposed to be done "well before taking the action," ensuring other drivers can see it.

While I'm still new here, I know that if you learned to drive in Haliburton within the last 35 years, you likely learned from the same instructor and he probably sees the lack of use of blinkers on a daily basis.

So, let's all try collectively to be more courteous to each other while behind the wheel, and the next time you decide to be lazy and skip the signal, ask yourself: "What would Richard van Nood say?"

In the March 19 edition, in the story 'parents question school board census' we incorrectly stated questions around gender identity were omitted from the census for students in kindergarten to Grade 6. Questions on gender identity were presented to students of all ages. We apologize for this error.

SEND IN YOUR PHOTO OF THE WEEK

editor@thehighlander.ca

Editorial opinion

LETTERS

Amalgamation by choice or decree?

Dear editor,

Arithmetic is not my strong point, but if premier Doug Ford considers 126 councillors serving a population of 500,000 in the Niagara Region to be excessive and worthy of amalgamating, can Haliburton Highlands, with 32 serving a population of 22,000, be any less deserving of consolidation and conservation of tax dollars?

If my math is right, the ratio of councillors to residents is 1:3,900 in Niagara and 1:700 here.

Amalgamation by choice or decree? I think that may be the looming choice.

Fay Martin
Minden Hills

**editor's note: There are 24 elected positions, with eight also sitting on County of Haliburton council.*

Podcast sets perfect tone

Dear editor,

I just wanted to pass along our sincere appreciation for your new podcast. It's great.

It's so comforting to know that our little tiny community has actual journalists that do the hard work. You guys are super impressive.

We've always enjoyed the paper, and your crossword is fantastic (never go A.I. on those please) but the podcast has given us a new appreciation for what you do. I think the tone is perfect.

We appreciate you.

Richard and Jo MacArthur
Haliburton

School census response

Dear editor,

Last week, I was contacted by *The Highlander* regarding its article on the student census. As chair of the J.D. Hodgson school council, I welcomed the opportunity to engage in this important discussion.

The concerns being raised by parents do not surprise me. I have shared in these concerns myself, and they are part of what motivated me to become involved in the School Council. It is important that these perspectives are acknowledged and taken seriously.

The school board has not clearly communicated how collecting this highly personal information from students is being used. Year over year, the questions appear to be more detailed and, for some families, increasingly intrusive. The onus is on the school board to be more transparent. Greater clarity from the outset may, in fact, lead to the level of participation and trust they are seeking.

It is equally important that we avoid making assumptions about parents' motivations, including attributing their concerns to political views. Doing so risks discouraging honest and constructive feedback, which is essential if the board genuinely wants to understand and respond to the community.

There is space for respectful dialogue on these matters at school council meetings, and I encourage parents to attend and engage directly. The next meeting will take place on March 30 at 4:30 p.m. at the JDH school office.

Andrea Hogan
Haliburton

PHOTO OF THE WEEK

Fred Pyziak captured this image of mom and baby eagle in flight.

HUMANS OF HALIBURTON HIGHLANDS

Bringing a love of lacrosse

By Susan Tromanhauser

Scott Stewart grew up loving hockey. He excelled so much that he was drafted by the Ottawa 67s of the Ontario Hockey League, a first step towards professional hockey.

In summers, to keep in shape, he played lacrosse. When offered a lacrosse scholarship at a Division I NCAA school, it was a choice between a guaranteed elite education versus a shot at a pro hockey career. Stewart chose Drexel School in Philadelphia, which ultimately led to a 12-year professional lacrosse career.

Pro lacrosse afforded Stewart the opportunity to travel the continent and experience a variety of cities from Edmonton, to Portland and Anaheim. It was his experience on the New Jersey Storm in East Rutherford, owned by Jayson Williams, a former NBA pro, that exposed Stewart to the high life of celebrities and the rich and famous, with the likes of Maury Pauvich and Connie Chung. Because it was the team's first year in the league, he learned how to build a franchise from the bottom up. While it was an exciting time, he also realized he preferred a quieter lifestyle.

A camping trip with his wife solidified his post-retirement decision - to move from urban life and raise their daughter in relative peace. They began looking at rural properties, finding a listing on a Wednesday, and by Sunday, were the owners of a home on Kernohan Farm Trail outside of Minden.

They arrived in Haliburton County with no jobs, no contacts, and little money – but they had a vision and Stewart said "it worked out fantastic."

In cities, they felt invisible, ignored by strangers. In the Highlands, they felt part of a community. They began to home school their daughter and became active participants in the home-schooling community. Stewart teaches a weekly sports program, and his wife is chair of Razzamataz, a non-profit organization bringing theatre for children to the County. Stewart recognizes the area works because "volunteers make the community run."

When Stewart discovered lacrosse was not available in the area, he used lessons learned from starting a pro team in New Jersey, to bring the culture of lacrosse to Haliburton County. In its third season, Raven Lacrosse is a program for six-to-12-year-olds to learn fundamentals as well as the excitement of the fast-paced game. Stewart co-ordinates lacrosse with the Haliburton and Minden arenas, taking advantage of the time ice is removed for a suitable box lacrosse venue; April 28 to June 30.

While hockey requires a lot of equipment, lacrosse only requires running shoes, a hockey helmet, gloves and a lacrosse stick. Stewart developed partnerships in the area to support his vision. Tim Hortons donated nets and Delancey Sports will order lacrosse sticks for anyone starting out.

Stewart is confident lacrosse culture will grow in the Highlands; after all, before Stewart moved to Minden, he didn't know he loved fishing. He is sure the people of Haliburton County just don't know yet they love lacrosse. To learn more, check out Raven Lacrosse on Facebook. 416-735-9564.

Scott Stewart. *Submitted.*

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Highlander community

Old cars and boats help fund food bank

By Mike Baker

Central Food Network (CFN) set a new record in January, receiving 80 calls for emergency support through the Haliburton County Heat Bank.

Ordinarily, the non-profit helps around 120 households navigate the cold-weather seasons by providing firewood and one-time grants for hydro, propane and furnace oil, but Kat Schouten, CFN's communications and donor engagement coordinator, expects that number to be higher this year.

"We're seeing increases across the board but are seeing it most starkly through the heat bank. We've had months where we've had large influxes of calls, but in January the phone did not stop ringing," Schouten said.

In January 2025, CFN received requests from 50 households, which Schouten said was a 45 per cent increase from 2024. Of the 80 calls this year, CFN assisted on 69. Among those receiving help were 50 adults, 34 children and 45 seniors.

Also in January, CFN helped five families tap into money through the Ontario Electricity Support Program, unlocking $3,012 in annual benefits.

"It's been a tough winter, and people are really feeling the impact of it, especially those on fixed incomes," Schouten said, with the recent rise in oil prices – leading to increased costs across the board – sparking another hike in call volumes.

Numbers are also up at CFN's food banks in Wilberforce and Cardiff. Schouten said 116 families were provided with groceries in January, with 184 adults and 57 children served through 323 visits. Another 30 families received hampers from volunteer drivers.

Volunteers with Central Food Network have seen an increase in demand across all programs over the past year. *Photo submitted.*

Donate a car

With demand at an all-time high, Schouten said CFN is coming up with new ways for people to support its operations. In December, the organization partnered with Donate a Car Canada, giving area residents the chance to gift proceeds raised from old vehicles to charity. The new program rolled out in early March.

"With the way things are today, people might not be able to give out of their pocket, but if they've got an old vehicle this could be the perfect opportunity to put it to good use. We accept cars, trucks, RVs, boats and motorcycles," Schouten said, noting the donations go through Donate a Car Canada.

The national association has been in place since 2003 and accepts vehicles whether they're running or not. Pickup is organized within 48 hours and charities usually receive payment within two weeks. Charitable receipts are mailed out to donors, Schouten said.

"Conversations around fundraising have been evolving quite a bit with the increases we're seeing across all programs. We're trying to find new ways to make it easier for people to donate and to create avenues for people outside of traditional giving," Schouten said.

Depending on whether the car is scrapped or sold at auction, the proceeds could be hundreds or thousands of dollars. Schouten said CFN analyzed its donations and spending in 2024 and calculated that every dollar donated created over $5 of impact across all programs.

While there haven't been any donated vehicles yet, Schouten thinks it could be a popular program – helping people declutter their properties whilst supporting the most vulnerable part of our community.

"We always say that we're neighbours helping neighbours. Everybody needs help sometimes to get them out of a hard time or make it to next week," Schouten said. "An old vehicle that probably doesn't mean [much to you] will make a huge difference to others."

With federal taxes due by the end of April, Schouten said CFN is running free clinics to help those on modest incomes and with simple tax situations to file.

Clinics are scheduled in-person and by appointment and are available until April 30. Schouten said filing tax returns unlocks financial benefits such as the federal 'baby bonus', GST and HST rebates and the Ontario Trillium Benefit. Appointments can be scheduled by calling 705-306-0565.

MY Haliburton HIGHLANDS
Seniors Active Living Centre

Check out this month's SALC events and activities for residents aged 55+

Board game drop-in – various dates in April

April 1, 2, 10, 22, & 29
Genealogy for Seniors

April 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29
Yarners Social

April 2 & 16
Painting Class

April 2, 9, 14, 15, 24
SALC Needle Felting – Ladybugs

April 8
Exercise with Georgia

April 9
Community Resources Fair

April 9, 16, 23 & 30
Functional Senior Fitness w/Georgia

April 10, 17, & 24
Seniors Balance & Cardio Classes

April 11
Musical Coffee House

April 11
Gardening for Seniors

April 13, 20, 27
QiGong for Seniors

April 13
Webinar: Bone Health 101

April 14, 15, 17 & 22
Tech Help Walk-In Clinic

April 14, 21 & 28
Exercise Classes with Georgia

April 15
Crafternoon Drop-In

April 20
Webinar: Renewal of Licence for 80+

April 22
Mindful Movement in the Forest

April 23
Savouring Stories

April 24
Calling Cribbage Players

April 29
Senior Wellness Workshop

April 30
Garden Design with Native Plants

Ontario
Funding for this program has been provided by the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility

For full details, visit HaliburtonCounty.ca/SALC or pick up a calendar at a municipal office, library or Legion near you!

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CaseysWaterwell.ca

Highlander arts

Sharing the awe of the high Arctic

By Lisa Gervais

The immensity of the Arctic has provided fodder for artist Janet Read, who will bring more than 40 paintings to the Agnes Jamieson Gallery for an exhibition that will be on display from March 26 to May 23.

Read travelled to the high Arctic in 2018, 2023, and 2025. Those trips have helped form a body of work.

She told *The Highlander* she did the journeys by ship with Zodiac trips ashore.

"You have those wonderful expanses of ocean, and places such as Devlin Island come to mind. It's like a layer cake with sedimentary rock dusted with snow. And it is almost a desert environment. It can be ocean to a mile-high sky if it's clear."

The Innisfil-based artist has named her exhibit 'mute eloquence of light.' She got the name from Christine Ritter's memoir *A Woman in the Polar Night*. A painter, Ritter spent a year in 1934 living in a remote hut in the Arctic with her trapper husband. She coined the phrase.

"It's a really apt description for the kind of work I do," Read said of the abstracts she has created from the immensity of the space, and elemental forms of land and water, since there is no real vegetation, save Arctic flora.

Asked about climate change, Read said she is no scientist and three short trips to the Arctic are not evidence-based. However, "the Indigenous people who live there on the front lines are seeing the differences."

As for the process of her art, Read's exhibit consists of abstract paintings on linen, panels in oil and acrylic, and hybrid drawings/paintings on Duralar.

"I'm dropping graphite powder and wiping with paper towel. I'm using my fingers. I'm using solvent and sometimes I stab the brush to get a drip," she said of some of her techniques – aimed at achieving a translucency.

She added she hopes the work inspires emotion; "people who have been to the Arctic really react to it as being true to the experience."

For those who have not ventured to the Far North, she hopes to inspire curiosity about the region and maybe they will visit it themselves one day. She aims to raise awareness about geopolitical ramifications, in places such as Greenland.

But really, her work is about "the beauty of the place, the awe and the wonder," and she hopes gallery visitors feel that. She said she was delighted the gallery accepted her submission.

Shannon Kelly, manager of cultural services with Minden Hills, said the official opening reception with the artist talk will take place April 11 from 1-3 p.m.

"Improvisation and spontaneous abstract mark-making visualize the processes of wind and water relating her experiences of the high Arctic in Canada and the Greenlandic west coast. These works extend earlier themes initiated by residencies in Newfoundland and western Ireland," Kelly said.

She added, "abstraction conveys an emotional and poetic response to the environment. It is mediated imaginative experience, recreated as visual works. What do you see? What do you feel? Are you moved to action?"

Learn more: www.janet-read.com

The Agnes Jamieson Gallery is at 176 Bobcaygeon Rd., Minden and is open Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission by donation.

Artist Janet Read with her painting 'Devon Island.' *Submitted.*

Highlander arts

David Partridge released his fifth solo album *Enough* on March 15. *Photo submitted.*

Music cheaper than therapy

By Mike Baker

On the face of it, David Partridge's latest musical release appears to be the polar opposite of his roots in punk rock, but a deeper look – and listen – reveals several parallels.

His fifth solo album *Enough*, released under the pseudonym Deep Pity, came out March 15. The four-song record touches on familiar themes through much of Partridge's work.

"I always write about things that are heavy – that's the nature of my songwriting," Partridge said. "I never really want to play guitar when I'm feeling good… it's when I'm bummed that I pick it up and try to work things out. It's cheap therapy."

While his 2025 release *Hurt People* focused mostly on one specific point of pain, *Enough* unpacks the musician's thoughts on where the world, and society, is today.

"It's kind of back to this existential hole of being, where all things feel crazy and digging into how I process that," he said. "This is something that's consistent across most of my songs, honestly."

Like most artists, his love affair with music stretches back to childhood. He remembers messing around with a broken guitar at home as a young kid but started taking guitar lessons when he was 12.

Though he loved it immediately, he didn't enjoy learning hit classics like The Eagles' *Hotel California*. The flair just wasn't there.

"I never really wanted to play any of the big commercial songs. I just wanted to write my own music," Partridge said.

Learning the basics on guitar and figuring out how music can flow broke some sort of dam in Partridge's mind. Since then, it's been a constant waterfall of original content. He used to carry a notebook wherever he went, filling space anytime inspiration struck. Adapting to the new age of technology in recent years, he estimates he has around 500,000 words tucked away on his smartphone.

One of the songs on his latest release was penned 21 years ago.

"I decided to put it out now because I had three newer songs I already liked for my album and thought to myself 'why not just put out a fourth song that I like'… usually, on all my previous records, there's one song that I don't like, but for this one I dare say that I like all of them. This is the first time where there doesn't feel like an obvious weak link."

His favourite thing about the album is how versatile it is, lyrically. He's gotten feedback from listeners who have interpreted songs in different ways.

"I love that – I've talked to people who tell me a certain song hit home for them because of X, Y or Z and I know that's not what it's about, but it's so cool hearing how different people hear and take my words," he said. "A lot of people listen to my songs and go 'you're so sad', but that's not it at all… to me, it's all about taking experiences and viewpoints that can be difficult and turning them into something beautiful."

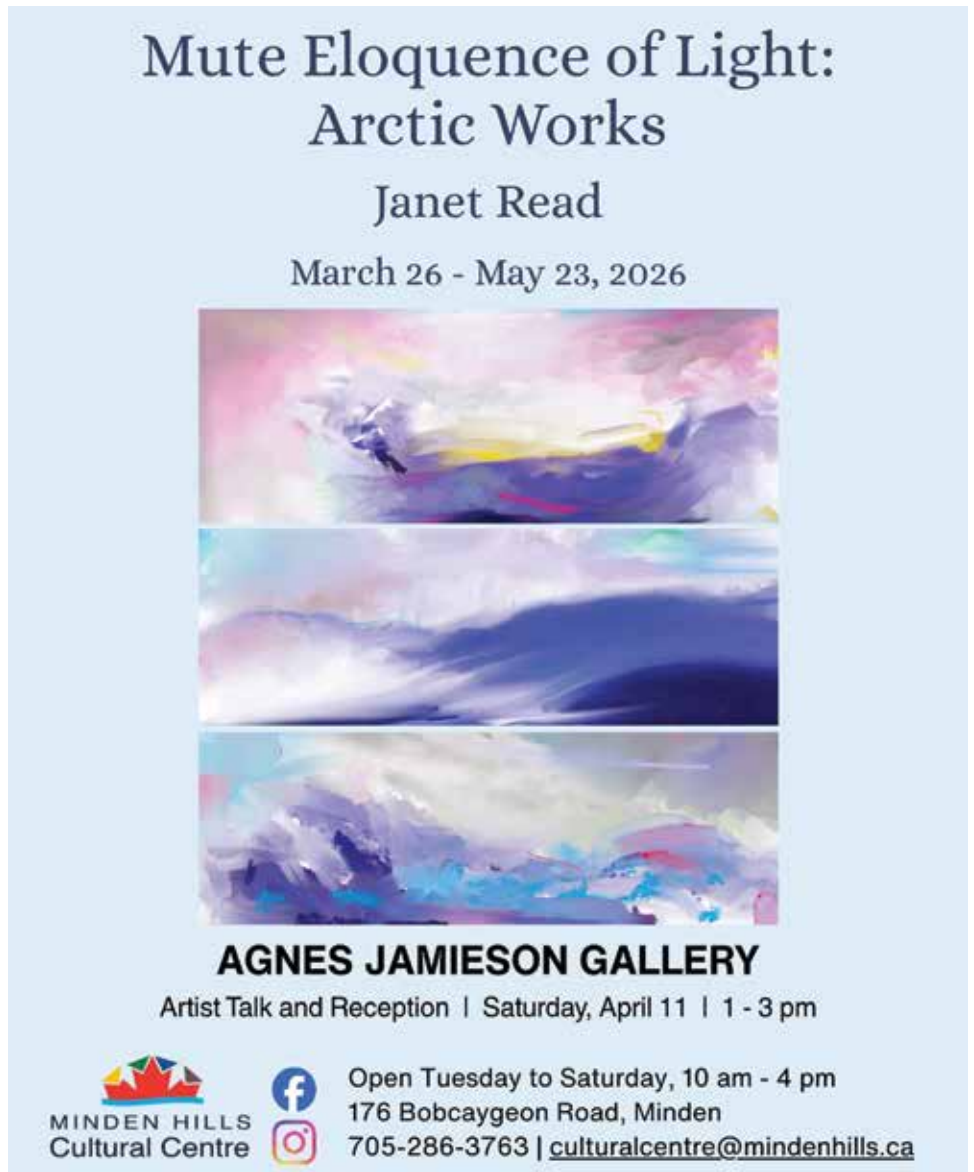
He sings, writes and produces all his material – and even performs most of the instruments. For *Enough*, he played the drums, guitar, bass, piano, mandolin, glockenspiel and melodica. His friend, Emma Ferner, collaborated on violin.

Partridge credits his move to the Highlands in 2021 with reinvigorating his love for music. He toured extensively with several bands in the late 90s and early 2000s and ran a music shop and recording studio in Milton from 2012-2019.

He draws inspiration from those around him – and the people across the world who listen to his material. He has 620,000 plays on Apple Music from across the globe.

Partridge says he's not sure when he'll get back to work at his home studio, but ideas are already percolating for a collaboration with a local poet that he hopes to work on later this year.

"There's definitely a basking in the 'I'm done' part for now… but history shows I don't stay there too long."



Highlander environment

THE ANGLICAN PARISH
OF HALIBURTON

Easter Services 2026

St. George's Church

617 Mountain Street, Haliburton

Palm Sunday
Sunday, March 29 at 10:30 a.m.

Maundy Thursday
Thursday, April 2 at 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday
Friday, April 3 at 10:30 a.m.

Easter Sunday
Sunday, April 5 at 10:30 am

The Reverend Canon Dr David Barker
705-457-2074 (parish)
office@haliburtonanglican.ca

Minden & District Horticultural Society

Seedy Saturday
Free Family Friendly Event

- Swap seeds
- Shop vendors
- Learn from experts

March 28, 10am-2pm
Minden Community Centre

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CORNER GALLERY
123 Maple Ave.

Science on show at Legion

By Mike Baker

U-Links' annual celebration of research returns to Haliburton March 28 and the non-profit's program co-ordinator, Frank Figuli, said there will be updates on almost 50 student-led projects conducted in the Highlands over the past year.

Whether you're interested in learning about soil quality at Abbey Gardens, the feasibility of bringing a municipal biodigester for organics to Haliburton County, or the benefits of artificial loon nesting platforms, Figuli said there's a wide range of environmental, ecological and social issues on the agenda.

"We're going to have eight in-person oral presentations and research posters encapsulating 38 projects – those are record high numbers for U-Links," Figuli said.

He noted that, since September, U-Links has worked with 239 students from Trent and Guelph universities cultivating local studies.

Since 1999, the non-profit has partnered with more than 3,000 students on over 600 projects. It takes ideas submitted by community groups and residents and matches them with student researchers, who work in the field analyzing trends and compiling data.

"The students get a great dose of experiential education while conducting their research and U-Links community partners get their questions answered or problem solved," Figuli said.

One of the key initiatives addresses the viability of artificial loon nesting platforms, with students Cate Crawford-Thompson and Ellise Morgan working on Halls and Hawk lakes to assess how they can operate on waterbodies with fluctuating water levels within the Trent Severn system.

"Some of the challenges with loons is they don't have walking legs, so when the water levels go down too far it becomes quite difficult for them to reach their nests… then if the water levels go up too high, it can actually drown out the eggs they lay," Figuli said, noting they're presenting a model he feels could be fit for any lake in the County.

Trent's Laura Scrivener will discuss underground greenhouses, looking at models for implementing geothermal technology to extend the growing season for select crops; Sam Winterbottom is presenting results on an assessment of carbon stocks for the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust; Tristan Tschinkel analyzes the impact of recreational trails on soils and vegetation in deciduous forests in the County; while Florence Bergeron and Lenore Reid unpack municipal digesters.

U-Links annual celebration of research provides a treasure trove of information on several key environmental issues. *Photo submitted.*

Figuli said they're engineered systems that use bacteria to break down food waste and other organic materials.

"They investigated how biodigestion could divert waste from landfills, lower greenhouse gas emissions, generate renewable energy and, where possible, produce nutrient-rich byproducts," Figuli said, noting they're used in many Ontario municipalities – including the City of Kawartha Lakes.

The event's keynote speaker, Dr. Karen Thompson, will be talking about green care farms. Pioneered in Europe, the program offers hands-on respite care to people living with dementia. There will also be a panel discussion with Sue Tiffin, Godfrey Tyler and Jennifer Semach on programming offered by the County and at Waverly Brook farm and Walkabout Farm Therapeutic Riding Association.

Asked why people should attend, Figuli said the event is all about improving attendees' information capital.

"I think all these projects put new perspectives on problems that people may not be thinking about," he said.

The celebration is free to attend, with lunch provided. Register online at ulinks.ca.

CONGRATULATIONS!

HALIBURTON HIGHLANDS OUTDOORS ASSOCIATION
HALIBURTON FISH HATCHERY
SINCE 1992

The HHOA held their annual Wild Game Dinner Saturday March 21/26. It was another successful, sold-out fundraiser that included a Bennelli 30-06 being drawn at the dinner. The winner, Christina Black (centre) photographed with Outdoors Plus owner, Chandler Zedic (left) and Dan Smith, HHOA President (right).

Thanks to everyone who showed their ongoing support for all we do at the Haliburton Highlands Outdoors Association.

Baz Conlin of Haliburton Micromeadows will be on hand for 'seedy Saturday'. *File.*

Seedy Saturday to inspire gardeners

By Lisa Gervais

The Minden & District Horticultural Society will host its first ever 'seedy Saturday' on March 28.

The free event is designed to inspire Haliburton County gardeners, with a seed exchange, demonstrations of seed starting techniques, and speakers and vendors covering everything from pollinators, to seed saving, to skin care.

FEEL (Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning) will be onsite with interactive kids' activities. The Haliburton County Master Gardeners will provide advice for gardening questions. And, vendors will have wares on hand for purchase.

Event organizer, Diana Westland, said Seeds of Diversity started the initiative to save locally-grown heritage seeds. She said it is important to save food seed used to our environmental conditions.

"This is safer, as reliance on only a few species grown as a monoculture for grocery stores leaves us vulnerable if that species is attacked by a disease. This also applied to exchange of native plant seeds for the same reason. The more diverse, the more resilient an ecosystem is and the more insects it can support."

She said sometimes organizations only do seed exchange, but this event is different.

"We have tried to bring together food security organizations and ecological organizations with similar goals to educate the public on what services are available. It also hopefully encourages more people to try their hand at growing."

Westland said "community support for the first-ever 'seedy Saturday' has been overwhelmingly positive. They have two speakers and a demonstration to help beginners to grow their own plants indoors.

At 10:30 a.m., Cheryl Fraser will present 'the bee project: discovering the bees around you.' At 11:30 a.m., Pauline Plooard will demonstrate indoors sowing for beginners. And, at 12:30 p.m., Basil Conlin of Haliburton Micromeadows will discuss 'seed orchards - preserving genetic diversity.'

Westland added, "there are a variety of local seed and garden vendors and a few interactive games and activities for the kids.

"We're encouraging people to bring along small packages of locally-collected garden seeds to exchange at the event on Saturday. If they don't have seeds to bring, that's okay, too. There will be a variety of vegetable and flower seeds donated by locals and donor companies."

A donation of 25 cents per package is suggested to help offset the costs of hosting the event.

Vendors and community groups at 'seedy Saturday' include Abbey Gardens, B's Creations, Gaia Organic Seeds, Haliburton Micromeadows, Organic Me Honey Bees Natural Skin Care, SIRCH Community/ Nathan's Farm, Swallowtail Native Plants, and Tamarack Lodge.

'Seedy Saturday' will take place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Minden Community Centre, upper level (55 Parkside St., Minden).

Westland said there may still be snow on the ground and it doesn't feel like spring but, "I've been planning since January as I grow my own seedlings. Planning and dreaming are a great way to pass the winter.

"The actual outdoor planting will be the end of May so there is still lots of time."

Minden & District Horticultural Society will be celebrating its 50th year in 2027 and is a part of the Ontario Horticultural Society. Their mission is "learning, planting, sharing with a community" and they host activities and events, along with maintaining the public gardens in Minden.

Find out more at mindenhorticulturalsociety.ca

Advertorial

Paradise Found in Carnarvon, Ontario

By David Vincent

Who thought visiting a bakery would be a spiritual experience? Well, this bakery's location in a former church certainly sets the stage. The Country Bakery is in the former Church of Zion just off Highway 35 in Carnarvon, Ontario. The customer experience is truly 'heavenly'!

A casual offer to buy a bakery many years ago transformed a farmers market vendor without any commercial bakery experience into a successful bakery owner today. Intrigued by the bakery's potential, the prospective bakery owner, convinced a business associate to partner with her. The two aspiring bakery owners had history together through their respective booths at farmers markets. Match made in heaven!

The big business breakthrough? An English Royal Wedding! Yes, customers were coming from everywhere, lining up in the bakery, calling in large orders so they could enjoy Country Bakery scones while watching the wedding celebration! The scones, along with carrot cakes, continue to be the bakery's top sellers!

The business associate left the bakery business in 2017 transitioning to become the bakery owner's landlord as the business associate and her husband purchased the Church of Zion property the bakery operates in.

The Country Bakery is a must-see destination if exploring this quaint little town in Haliburton Highlands. Your unique 'heavenly' experience starts with the former church's location a short distance from the Highway 35 and 118 crossroads. Could this be a sign from above? Start your pilgrimage to bakery paradise by entering through its welcoming white doors and walking on the combination of well-worn concrete floor and warm wooden wall planks. The mouth-watering fresh baked goods are just around the corner, waiting to enlighten your sense of sight, smell and, of course, taste. Truly, a divine experience for all your senses. The multiple shelves of locally sourced products from Oakwood, the soups and spreads made by the church owner and so much more including antiques and other interesting items are enticing your curiosity.

The bakery employs about ten residents during its busy period. Each employee's work hours are adjusted to their individual work and lifestyle requirements. The time spent scheduling is well invested as you meet employees that are happy to serve you!

Community involvement – absolutely! The Country Bakery supports local lake associations and radio stations with in-store purchase vouchers.

Your 'spiritual' bakery journey is both carefully and thoughtfully choreographed by the bakery owner. Your in-store experience is her top priority. The bakery hours are 8 am to 4 pm seven days a week between April and Thanksgiving weekend. You'll see bakery owner there every day overseeing the business, ensuring customer needs and feedback are addressed immediately. Products available are reflective of what the bakery owner has learned from customers over time. The photos tell part of the story. How cool is that?

Want independent opinions on the bakery experience? Check out the 200+ Google Reviews (4.8 stars/5) attesting to the bakery owner's success in delivering a consistently superior customer experience.

Give yourself a special blessing by visiting the Country Bakery. Take a minute to discover who this bakery owner is. Better yet, take a minute to speak with her. Browse the antiques. Treat yourself to the home baked goods, soups, spreads, and so much more. Winter hours start after Thanksgiving weekend –10 am to 4 pm, Friday to Monday.

Highlander events

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- Custom Welding
- Engineering
- Drafting
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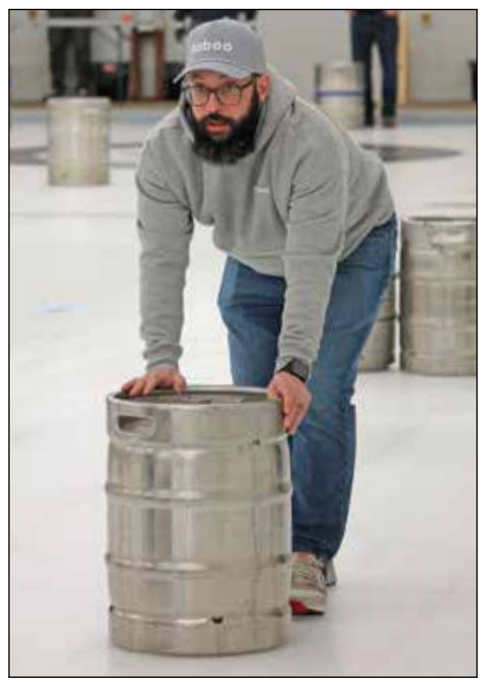


Hurry hard

Boshkung Social hosted its annual keg curling tournament at the Minden Curling Club March 23. Teams used empty beer kegs instead of curling rocks. They attempted to maneuver the kegs down ice to the rings, while enjoying music, snacks, and adult beverages. *(Lisa Gervais)*

Top: Kim Elrick shuttles a keg down the rink while Kevin Hodgkinson looks on. Middle: Cam Galloway provides tunes for curlers. Bottom left: Al Chudnovsky kegs it. Bottom right: Boshkung Social owner Mathew Renda contemplates his shot. *Photos by Lisa Gervais.*

Highlander events

Wild night for meat

Haliburton Highlands Outdoors Association hosted its annual wild game dinner and silent auction on Saturday (March 21) at the Haliburton Legion. The sold-out event drew 200 attendees and featured a variety of meats including bear, elk and wild boar. The event raised about $20,000 to help fund the association's operations throughout the County.

Top: There was a full house at the Legion enjoying unique cuisine. Middle: Colin Watterworth, Laura Hicks and Scot Curry serve some food. Bottom: Attendees view silent auction items. *Photos by Adam Frisk.*

THANK YOU, HALIBURTON HIGHLANDS!

The Haliburton Highlands February Folk Festival was a heartwarming celebration of music, community, and winter spirit — and it simply wouldn't have been possible without you.

To our talented performers, dedicated volunteers, generous sponsors, local businesses, venue partners, and every attendee who braved the cold to share in the warmth of live folk music — thank you. Your passion, energy, and support brought our community together and filled the season with joy.

Thank you for keeping the music alive. We can't wait to see you again next year!

— Haliburton Highlands February Folk Festival Team

FEBRUARY FOLK FEST · APPLE TREE RECORDING STUDIO · CANOE 100.9 FM · HCDC Haliburton County Development Corporation · Haliburton Highlands · Haliburton Rotary · Haliburton County Folk Society

Saturday, April 4th, 2026

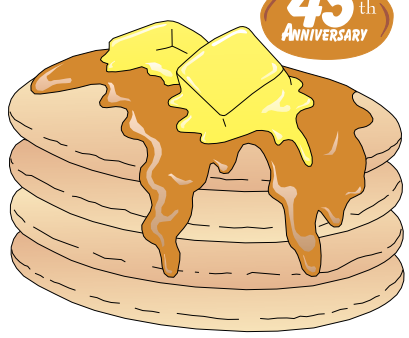
Easter Weekend

9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Lloyd Watson Centre, Wilberforce

45th Anniversary

Maple Syrup Festival



WILBERFORCE FUNRAISING GROUP VOLUNTEERS IN action

Pancakes and Sausages

with locally produced pure Maple Syrup

All-you-can-eat

Child (10 & under) $4.00

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FREE ADMISSION

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Doc(k) Day 2026

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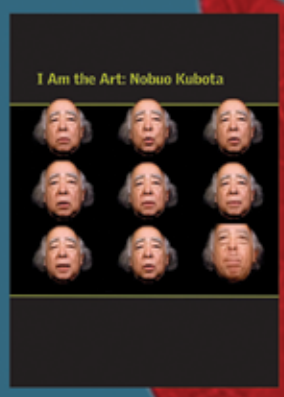

10:00 AM
I AM THE ART: NOBUO KUBOTA 85 mins

I Am the Art is a bold, intimate portrait of a Japanese-Canadian trailblazer whose creativity never stopped evolving. From early sculpture to sound poetry, avant-garde jazz, and live performance, Nobuo Kubota spent a lifetime making art. This is also a love story of caring for his 96-year-old wife, who lived with advanced Alzheimer's.

1:30 PM
CLAIRTONE 73 mins

The captivating rise and fall of Clairtone Sound Corporation, an audacious Canadian electronics company founded by Peter Munk and David Gilmour during the vibrant 1960s. An immigration story of dauntless entrepreneurship and optimism.

3:30 PM
WE LEND A HAND
THE FORGOTTEN STORY OF ONTARIO FARMERETTES

49 mins

The true story of the Ontario Farmerettes, 40,000 teenage girls who volunteered to work on Ontario farms between 1941 and 1952 to help produce food for the frontlines in Europe.

7:30 PM
THE ART OF ADVENTURE

90 mins +

As young men in their twenties, renowned wildlife artist Robert Bateman and spirited biologist Bristol Foster embark on a globe-trotting adventure in the 1950's in a Land Rover they name the Grizzly Torque. This is a powerful story of environmental activism, youthful naivety, human connections and respect for all living things.

Q&A WITH ALISON REID, DIRECTOR ROBERT BATEMAN AND BRISTOL FOSTER

VIP PASS $35 ($30 FOR SEASON PASSHOLDERS) ON-LINE

THOSEOTHERMOVIES.COM

MOVIES $10 AT THE DOOR
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A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE HALIBURTON & DISTRICT LIONS CLUB FOR PROVIDING SNACKS (BY DONATION).
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Highlander events

An active March Break

Families in the County found ways to spend time together and stay active during March Break last week. From public skating and shinny at A.J. LaRue Arena, to snowshoeing and tobogganing at Glebe Park, school kids were out and about enjoying some time off and decent late winter weather.

Top: Tammy Everitt encourages her daughter, Laken at the public skate in Haliburton. Middle left: Ines and Eric Lancia glide along the ice. Middle right: Braydon Mitchell catches some air at Glebe Park. Bottom: Shane and Ben Both also enjoyed a few rips down the hill on Saturday. *Photos by Adam Frisk.*

Highlander events

Township of Algonquin Highlands

PUBLIC MEETING

Proposed Change of Building Permit Fees

TAKE NOTICE pursuant to Section 7(1) of the Ontario Building Code Act, 1992 empowers Council to pass certain by-laws respecting construction, demolition, change of use, permits, fees and inspections.

Pursuant to Section 7(6) of the Ontario Building Code Act, 1992, The Council of the Corporation of the Township of Algonquin Highlands will be holding a **Public Meeting on April 16, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.** in the Council Chambers at 1123 North Shore Road, Algonquin Highlands, Ontario, to consider fee changes to the Building Fees. Information will be provided at the meeting on the estimated costs of enforcing and administering the Building Code Act, the amount of the proposed fee(s) and the rationale for changing and/or imposing fees.

AND PERSON may attend the meeting, and/or submit in writing, in support of or objection to the proposed fees setting out the objection to the By-law and the reasons of the objection.

Additional information relating to proposed fee changes is available by contacting the **Greg Moore, CBO during regular offices hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) at 705-489-2379 ext. 330 or emailing gmoore@algonquinhighlands.ca**

Dated this 25th day of March, 2026.

Dawn Newhook, Clerk/Deputy CAO
1123 North Shore Road
Algonquin Highlands, Ontario K0M 1S0
Tel: (705) 489-2379 ext. 333
dnewhook@algonquinhighlands.ca

Prepping for drop

The North Hastings Community Fish Hatchery held its annual 'fin-clipping' day March 19, attracting more than a dozen volunteers. Mike Thomas, the hatchery's vice president, said folks spent a few hours clipping the right pectoral fin on 10,000 lake trout and brook trout that will be stocked into area lakes in April. "The reason for the clipping is so that, when the fish are caught, the catcher can determine the age of the fish by calling the hatchery," Thomas said. "Each year, we change which fin is clipped in order to keep track of the ages." Thomas said the hatchery is looking for more volunteers and is raising money for its operations through 2026, with a goal of bringing in $30,000. For more information, visit fishhatchery.ca. *(Mike Baker)*

Above: Finn Johnston of Coe Hill clips the fin of a brook trout. *Photos submitted.*

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Township of Algonquin Highlands is seeking

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July 7th- August 25th, 2026
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TheHighlander
2026 HANDBOOK

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dawn@thehighlander.ca
705-306-5015

Home of the Highland Storm

Storm Blue U7 G.J. Burtch

The Highland Storm Blue U7 G.J. Burtch team wrapped up an amazing season last weekend and what a ride it was.

This group showed incredible growth, effort, and a whole lot of personality. Our team had mostly first year u7s with one second year player who did an exceptional job leading by example.

We had one player who had never skated or played hockey before, but wow, was she ever determined to learn and was flying by the end of the season. In between those two players, we had a mixture of skill and personalities and we had so much fun as a group.

Over the season, we watched our players develop their skating, passing, and shooting skills, but also their ability to listen, work together, and (mostly) remember which net to shoot on. The improvement from day one to now has been nothing short of impressive, and it's been so much fun to watch their confidence grow each week.

Our group brought great attitudes and big smiles, making every ice time something to look forward to. On game days, they gave it their all; cheering loudly for teammates, celebrating goals like they just won the Stanley Cup, and showing great teamwork along the way.

This team wasn't just about hockey. It was about friendships, fun, and learning what it means to be part of a team. The friendships formed in the dressing room will last forever.

A big thank you to all the parents for your support, patience, and dedication. A special thanks to the coaching staff, Judd and Kevin, and to our team manager, Jess. Thank you to our video specialist, Shelby, for documenting all the great moments this season.

To the players. It was a pleasure coaching you and honestly the highlight of my week. The coaches are so proud of every player on Storm Blue. Keep skating, keep smiling, keep working hard, and keep loving the game.

Great job team. See you next season. (*Submitted*)

Storm U7 Smolen Dentistry

The Highland Storm U7 – Smolen Dentistry team continued to demonstrate that the heart of youth sports is found in development and teamwork.

Over a season that included 16 regular season games and four tournaments, this enthusiastic group of young players made meaningful progress both on and off the ice.

In net, Carly Nelson, AJ Raposo, and Everlee Miscio each discovered a passion for goaltending, showing confidence and determination that points to a bright future between the pipes.

Up front, Hayden Roberts, Lucas Cundall, and Rayson Kelly developed impressive stickhandling skills, growing into strong offensive players who embraced opportunities to carry the puck and create plays.

On the defensive side, Sawyer Hamilton, Marty Lopez, Dextin Clark, and Kenlee Wilson showcased their versatility. While building solid defensive habits, they also demonstrated confidence in joining the rush and contributing offensively throughout the season.

Head coach Alex Lopez reflected on the team's journey: "I am so proud of how well all the kids played and how far they've come over the year. I had the best seat in the house to see big goals, great saves, and, most importantly, kids working together. I'm grateful to have been part of the experience."

The team wrapped up their season at the Glen Dart Tournament in Haliburton, bringing home medals and, more importantly, excitement and enthusiasm for the seasons ahead. *(Submitted).*

What's on

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION EVENTS

Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 129 Haliburton

Mondays: Office open 9 a.m. to noon, clubroom closed. Bridge at 1 p.m., youth dart league (ages 10-18) 6:20 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Tuesdays: Cadets after school starts at 5 p.m., meeting starts at 6 p.m. Games and cards night starting at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome. Darts league 7 p.m. start.
Wednesdays: Bid euchre 1 p.m. start, Remembrance Hall. Bingo will resume in the spring.
Thursdays: General meeting third Thursday of the month, March to December; ladies auxiliary meeting last Thursday of the month, February to November.
Fridays: Meat draw, five draws, five prize each draw, first draw at 4:30 p.m., last draw at 6:30 p.m., tickets are $2 per draw; fun darts at 4:30 p.m. onwards; 50/50 draw at 5 p.m., tickets are $1 and available in the clubroom.
Saturdays: Open only for special events Clubroom hours: Monday 3-6 p.m., Tues 5-9 p.m., Wed/Thurs 3-6 p.m., Fri 3-7 p.m., Saturday/Sunday closed.

Royal Canadian Legion - Mabel D. Brannigan Branch 636 Minden

Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. **Monday to Thursday** with regular menu and daily special including Liver Lovers' **Tuesday**.
Friday Fish & Chips & Wings. Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and dinner 4-7 p.m.
Saturday all day breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with meat draws at 11 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541

Weekly activities:
Karaoke: call for dates
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week.
Monday: Euchre 1-3 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1-3 p.m., Darts 7-9 p.m. and euchre 7-9 p.m.

Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 624 Wilberforce

Monday: open 7 to 10 p.m. Darts March 30 at 7 p.m.
Tuesday: closed, special events only. Exercise club March 31 at 1:30 p.m.
Wednesday: open 2 to 10 p.m. Darts April 1 at 2 p.m.; quick supper from 5 to 6:30 p.m.; cribbage at 6:30 p.m.
Thursday: open 2 to 10 p.m. HHHS social rec March 26 at 10 a.m.
Friday: open 2 to 11 p.m. March 27 is community care lunch at noon and wings and jam session from 5 to 8 p.m.
Saturday: open 2 to 9 p.m. Meat draw March 28 at 3 p.m. Trivia March 28 at 7 p.m.
Sunday: closed, special events only.

Royal Canadian Legion – Branch 566 Cardiff

Hours: Sunday and Monday 3 to 6 p.m. and Thursday 3 to 9 p.m.
Events: Breakfast on the first Sunday of each month from 9 to 11 a.m.; euchre on the second Sunday of each month at 12:30 p.m. Shuffleboard every Thursday from 7 to 9 p.m. Music and jam session ever second Saturday of the month from 1 to 4 p.m.
Everyone welcome.

EVENTS

March 26, 4 to 7 p.m. Talking Circles community session at Robert McCausland Memorial Community Centre. Sponsored by The Land Between and Indigenous partners, this is the first of a four-part series and will focus on changes to wetlands, forests and wildlife across our region. Free to attend.

March 27, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Open door at SIRCH Bistro and Bakery. Feeling disconnected? New to the community? Carrying a lot? Come out to this new monthly drop-in for free coffee, conversation and connection. No presentations or expectations. Taking place on the last Friday of every month.

March 27, 7 p.m. Highlands Little Theatre presents *Calendar Girls* at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion. Tickets are $25. There's also a matinee performance March 28 at 2 p.m.

March 27, overnight. Places for People is returning to Head Lake Park for its annual 'sleeping in cars' fundraiser. For one night, participants choose to step outside their comfort zone to better understand the reality many people face every day. Interested in participating, visit www.zeffy.com/en-CA/peer-to-peer/sleeping-in-cars--2026.

March 28, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Minden & District Horticultural Society is hosting its first ever 'seedy Saturday' at the Minden Community Centre. There will be a seed exchange, demonstrations, vendor booths, advice clinic and kids activities. All are welcome.

March 28, 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. U-Links is hosting its annual Celebration of Research at the Haliburton Legion. Come out to see all the hard work that students from various academic institutions have done throughout the past school year. Lunch included.

March 28, noon to 3 p.m. Re/Max Professionals North is hosting a 'Spring Hop' Easter event at Head Lake Park. There will be an Easter egg hunt for kids, face painting, crafts and colouring, photos with the Easter Bunny and more. Money and food is being raised for the Haliburton 4Cs Food Bank.

March 28, noon to 7 p.m. Sir Sam's Ski/Ride is hosting its annual Spring Slash – try your luck at making it across the 80-foot pond. The duck derby follows the pond jumping.

March 29, 2 to 5 p.m. Roberts Realty is hosting an free Easter event at the Haliburton Legion, featuring an Easter egg hunt, arts and crafts and professional photos with the Easter bunny. All are welcome.

April 4, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Wilberforce FUNraising Group is celebrating Easter weekend with its 45th annual Maple Syrup Festival at the Lloyd Watson Centre. There will be pancakes and sausages served with locally-produced maple syrup. All you can eat, adults $8 and children 10 and under $4. Free admission to the bazaar and craft fair.

April 4, 10 a.m. to noon, Family Easter Egg Hunt at the Robert McCausland Memorial Centre in Gooderham. Hosted by the Gooderham Pentecostal Church. Everyone is welcome to bring a basket and fill it with chocolate.

April 4, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Hop on out for the Highlands' annual Easter Market, taking place at the Haliburton Legion. Join for some egg-citing shopping. Free entry.

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What's on

The Loop Troupe's Mary Barker has penned a new whodunnit dinner theatre for the Wilberforce Legion. *File photo.*

Dinner theatre at legion

By Mike Baker

Trickery and diversion are at the heart of a new whodunnit penned by Wilberforce's Mary Barker, with the Loop Troupe returning to a new venue next month.

The local performative group is partnering with the Wilberforce Legion for *The Art of Deception*, with a 12-person cast appearing in two shows April 11 and 12. Barker dubbed the production "a masterpiece of bad decisions" that centres on a missing painting produced by County-based artist Luann Coghlan.

The feature also includes dinner, put together by the legion – cordon bleu is on the menu the first night, with lasagna served during the encore.

"The legion approached us last fall about doing something unique to celebrate the 100th anniversary of legions in Canada – I did some brainstorming and the story will definitely tie into that centennial," Barker said.

Most of the roles are small, she said, with the lead detective portrayed by Gary Mount – a veteran of several Loop Troupe productions. Coghlan will also play a minor role.

"She's our artist who has produced a masterpiece. In the story, the masterpiece goes missing and it's the detective's job to figure out what happened," Barker added.

Legion president, Rick Cleveland, will also be appearing – portraying himself as head of the Wilberforce establishment.

"It's not going to take a lot of acting," he said. "We've been rehearsing for a few weeks now and it's been a lot of fun. I'm not sure if it's been more laughing or acting."

Cleveland said the dinner theatre is serving as a fundraiser for the legion, with all proceeds going towards "long overdue" kitchen upgrades. He didn't have an estimated cost or timeline as of press time but said the renovation will include the installation of a new dishwasher, fridge, freezer and self-contained deep fryers. The space itself will also be reconfigured, adding new countertops and a secondary access.

The legion has become a popular dining destination for locals in recent years, Cleveland said, with Wednesday night quick dinners and fish and chips and wings on alternate Fridays drawing dozens of people every week. The space is also used by the legion's womens' auxiliary for breakfast on the second Sunday of the month.

"In the summer we do well to get around 100 people out for the dinners… it's lower during the winter, but we still have a good group of people who turn up every week," Cleveland said.

He doesn't remember the last time the kitchen was upgraded, noting it had been many years, so the planned renovations are "a major, major positive."

Barker said 2026 will likely be a quieter year for the Loop Troupe.

"We were going to try and do another feature this spring, but this partnership with the legion mushroomed into something much larger than we originally thought. We won't have anything original that we've written ourselves ready for the fall, but we are trying to find a suitable play we can bring in," Barker said. "We are planning for another locally-produced major play in spring 2027."

The April 11 show is sold out, with tickets for April 12 available at Agnew's General Store. Barker said there will be 60 people at each sitting.

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COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (Council Chambers, 7 Milne St., Minden) and with electronic participation. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

- March 26 – Regular Council Meeting
- April 16 – Special Council Meeting
- April 30 – Special Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link.

YOUTH PROGRAMS AT SG NESBITT MEMORIAL ARENA

We have a new set of youth programs ready for this spring! Sports include soccer, volleyball, multi-sport, basketball, krafty kids, and NEW ball hockey league. Check out the programs and register online at www.mindenhills.ca/recreation.

BID OPPORTUNITY

The Township of Minden Hills currently has the following tenders available:

- RFP No. RDS 26-001 Clear Lake Road Twin Culverts (submission deadline April 10, 2026, at 12:00 PM).

See Bid Opportunities on our website for more information.

REGISTER TO VOTE

The next municipal election will be held Monday, October 26, 2026.

To register and/or confirm your information, visit the Elections Ontario Register to Vote portal at RegisterToVoteON.ca

Need help or have a question? Visit Election staff at the Township of Minden Hills Administration building (7 Milne St.) Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE

Visit the Agnes Jamieson Gallery to view our new exhibit *Mute Eloquence of Light: Arctic Works* by Janet Read. The exhibit will be on display from March 26 – May 23. The Artist Talk and Reception will take place on Saturday, April 11 from 1:00 – 3:00 pm. Visit the Minden Hills website for more information.

The Gallery is open Tuesday to Saturday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Admission is by donation. For information on all the programs and exhibits offered at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre: culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca or call 705-286-3763.

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PAINTER - Professional, experienced, and dependable painter available for residential and commercial projects — from a single room to an entire home or office. Minor repairs included at no additional charge. Call or text 647-213-2875 for a free estimate or call 705-447-2213

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FOR SALE – GUILFORD FIREWOOD – Nicely cut and split, ready to burn. $140. per face cord – pick up. Delivery available, call 705-754-3034

FOR SALE - Native pollinator plants for sale. Visit haliburton micromeadows.ca or email Baz Conlin at haliburtonmm@gmail.com for more info. Pre-sales running until April 20th.

FOR RENT

FOR RENT - One bedroom upper level apartment, screened porch, satellite TV, walking distance to downtown, schools & hospital. No pets, non-smoker, $1,500.00 per month includes heat, hydro, a/c and satellite TV. Call 705-455-9878

FOR RENT

FOR RENT – Spacious ground floor 1 bedroom apt in town of Haliburton. Has 2 separate entrances, small deck, parking, self contained. $1,600/month plus utilities. Available immediately. Call Charles 416-771-1635

WANTED

J & D TOWING & SERVICE STATION - will pay top dollar for scrap cars. We also provide towing services as well as flat bed. Call Jim 705-447-2113

WORK WANTED

HALIBURTON MAN looking for work, Mason by trade, but familiar with all aspects of construction, reno's, demo, bush work, etc. Also, Chimney or Fireplace repair, Foundation repair, brick, block, stone, concrete & tile. Call Shannon at 306-317-7073

HELP WANTED

Employment Opportunity, Gull River Golf Club Grounds Crew/Maintenance Member. Please visit our website gullrivergolfclub.com for more information. Email events@gullrivergolfclub.com or Call 905-317-8715

EVENT

EVENT - STAINED GLASS WORKSHOPS from beginner up. Learn the art of Stained Glass in one or two day classes.. Call Tom at 705-286-3628

NOTICE

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS - Sundays - 10:30 am at St. Anthony's, 27 Victoria Street Haliburton. Wednesdays - 7:00 PM at Highland Hills United Church, 21 Newcastle St. in Minden - rear door. Thinking about alcohol. Thinking about stopping. We've been there. We can help!

AL ANON- WE CARE, are you troubled by someone's drinking? Meetings: Thursdays 7 p.m., St. Anthony's 27 Victoria Street, Haliburton, and Mondays 7 p.m. at Highland Hills United Church, 21 Newcastle, Rear Entrance, Minden. 1-888-4AL-ANON (1-888-425-2666) al-anon.org All are welcome.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS Admission is free and the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using. This meeting is for addicts only. New meeting in Haliburton that meets every Thursday from 7:30-8:30 p.m. at 83 Maple Ave. Unit 7A in Haliburton Halco Plaza, behind Castle Antiques. For more information and an online version visit www.cloana.org or call 1-888-811-3887

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@skycorlocksmithing

OBITUARY

In Loving Memory of

Pauline Fay Baker

(nee Clugston)

Passed away peacefully at home in Gooderham on Friday, March 20, 2026, at the age of 84.

Beloved wife of Dean for 66 years. Pauline was a loving mother, grandmother and great grandmother whose warmth and gentle spirit will be deeply missed. She is remembered with love by her family and all who knew her.

Pauline is survived by her children; Dean Jr. (Anna), Richard, Brenda (Mark) Fickel, Patricia Smith (Wayne Embler); by her 7 grandchildren; Carrie-Ann (Oliver), Nicholas, Joel, Kerrie (Matt), Lauren (Jordan), Thomas (Kiara), Samantha (Davy) and 11 great grandchildren: Vincent, Rylie-Ann, Hayden, Meika, Keija, Hailey, Noah, Owen, Keira, Maia and predeceased by Owen, by her siblings; Jean (Ken), Doreen, Hazel, Donna (Don), Timothy (Myrna), Joseph (Christine)and by her many nieces and nephews. Predeceased by her siblings Marilyn (2025), Albert (2019), Betty (2024), Richard (2018), Frank (2015) and Bill (2021)

Friends are invited to visit the family at the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., 127 Bobcaygeon Rd., P.O. Box 427, Minden K0M 2K0 on Friday, March 27, 2026 from 11:30 am until the time of the service to Celebrate Pauline's Life at 1:00 pm. Reception to follow in the Monk-Cray Family Centre at the funeral home. Interement will be held at the Emmanuel Lutheran Cemetery, Sherkston on Saturday, March 28, 2026 at 1:00 pm.

Memorial Donations to the Compassion Canada would be appreciated by the family.

"Forever in our hearts."

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

NOTICE

WWW.THEHIGHLANDER.CA

WANTED

WANTED ANTIQUES

Furniture, old signs, gold or costume jewellery, wrist and pocket watches, old coins, sterling silver, teacups, china, books, records, miltary items, paintings, **anything old**.

BOB CARRUTH • 705-887-1672

HELP WANTED

Township of Algonquin Highlands
requires a
Finance Assistant
(Maternity Leave Contract)

The Township of Algonquin Highlands is seeking applications from qualified individuals for the position of Finance Assistant.

Algonquin Highlands offers a competitive salary, compressed workweek and enrolment in the OMERS Pension Plan. Join a dedicated team that strives to make us the best place to live, work and play.

Visit our website at: www.algonquinhighlands.ca for the complete job description.

Qualified candidates are invited to submit a cover letter and resume by 3:00 p.m. on **Tuesday, April 7, 2026** to:

Dawn Mugford-Guay
Human Resources Coordinator
Township of Algonquin Highlands
1123 North Shore Road
Algonquin Highlands, ON K0M 1S0
Email: dmugfordguay@algonquinhighlands.ca

The Corporation of the County of Haliburton is currently recruiting for the following seasonal roles:

One (1) Seasonal 1 Operator/Labourer
DZ licence and experience with road maintenance and repair required. Hourly rate is $28.43. Unionized CUPE position.

Three (3) Flagperson/ Labourer(s)
G licence and experience in manual labour positions required. Hourly rate is $21.28. Unionized CUPE position.

One (1) Engineering (Seasonal) Student
G licence and current enrolment in an engineering program required. Hourly rate is $26.36. Unionized CUPE position.

One (1) Seasonal Capital Projects Inspector
G licence and at least five (5) years of related municipal experience. Hourly rate is $36.08. Unionized CUPE position.

Applications

Visit our website at www.haliburtoncounty.ca/careers for detailed postings and job descriptions. Forward your resume to shume@haliburtoncounty.ca no later than **March 27, 2026**.

We thank all who apply for this position; however only those selected for an interview will be contacted.
The County of Haliburton is an equal employer. Accommodation can be provided in all steps of the hiring process, please contact Human Resources for further details.
In accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act,* the information gathered will be used solely for the purpose of job selection.

Camp White Pine is seeking **Laundry and Cleaning Staff**. May to October or Summer Only. 2-3 positions available. Weekend work required. Starting at $21/hr.

Email: info@campwhitepine.com **call:** 416-322-6250

Highlander classifieds

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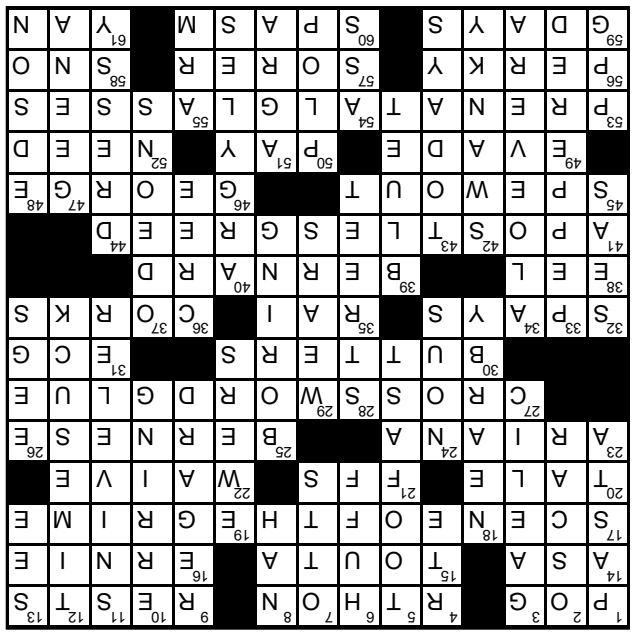
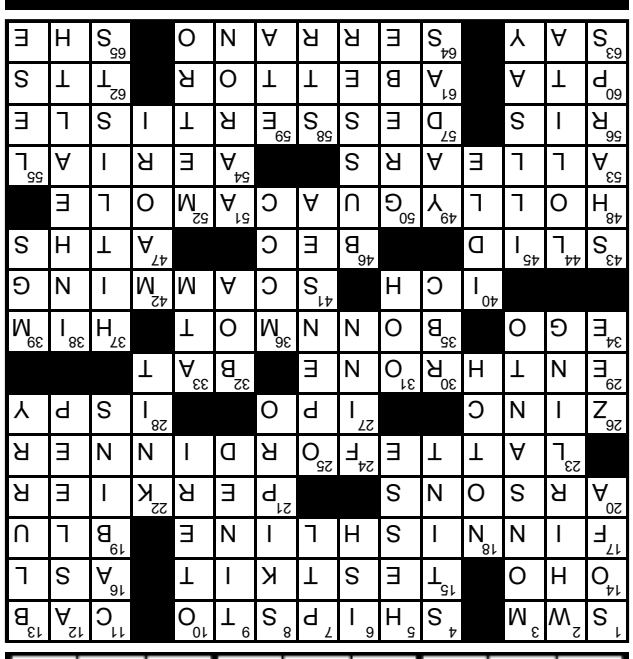
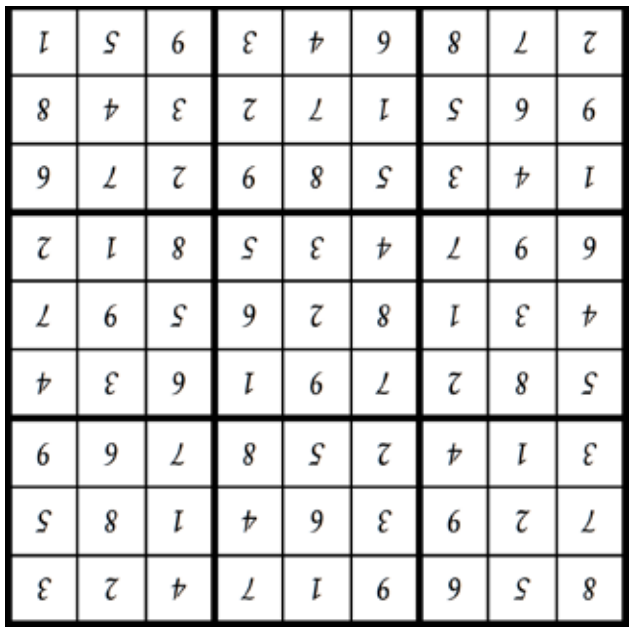
LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS



THIS WEEK'S SOLUTIONS





OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of

Robert "Bob" Bird

With deep love and gratitude for a life well lived, the family of Robert "Bob" Bird announces his peaceful passing on March 16, 2026, at the age of 80, surrounded by loved ones.

Predeceased by his loving wife Dianne Bird (nee Harrison). Bob was a proud and devoted father to their two children, Kellie (Steve) and Scott (Teressa). His legacy continues through his five beloved grandchildren, Logan (Danielle), Rachel (Tanner), Haiden, Erik, and Jayla.

Dear brother of Erma, Linda, Sherry, and Judy (Mark). Predeceased by his brothers Jack (Mary), Glen (Marie), Beau (Verna), and Earl. Predeceased by treasured brothers and sisters-in-law Ron, Lloyd, Dwight, Marylou, and Muriel. Cherished uncle of his many nieces and nephews.

Son of Arvine and Ruby Bird, Bob was born in Haliburton and dedicated his working years to County Auto & Rad six days a week. You could always expect honest service with a smile and a good chit-chat.

A true man of the woods and waters, Bob was never happier than when he was outdoors- whether he was hunting, casting a line, or sitting by a campfire. Above all, he was the steady anchor of his family. His greatest joy was found in the laughter of his children and grandchildren, the company of his friends, and the simple beauty of a day spent together.

He leaves behind a legacy of kindness, many great memories, and a family who will miss him every single day.

Celebration of Life

As per Bob's wishes, cremation has taken place. Friends and family are invited to call at the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME**, 13523 Hwy. #118 Haliburton, Ontario K0M 1S0 (705) 457-9209 on Wednesday, April 8, 2026, for a Visitation from 6:00 – 8:00 pm. A Celebration of Life will take place on Thursday, April 9, 2026, at 12:00 (noon). Visitation one hour prior. As an expression of sympathy, donations to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation would be appreciated by the family.

Community Funeral Home

In Loving Memory of

Roger Dale Billings

Passed away peacefully at the Haliburton Hospital on Wednesday, March 18, 2026, at the age of 77.

Loving partner of Debra Scott. Dear father of Carrie McKay and her husband Chris Rogers, Tony Billings and his wife Shannon, Pops to Jennifer, Jody, Julie, Jordana Graham. Loving Papa to 17 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren. Brother of Vince, Beatrice, Glenn, Carolyn, Ronald, Phillip, Jack, Eric and Debi. Son of the late Marjorie and Robert Billings. Fondly remembered by his nieces, nephews, family and friends.

Roger was a proud member of the King George IV Masonic Lodge for 25 years and served on the Glamorgan Fire Department as Fire Chief.

A Celebration of Roger's Life will take place at the Robert McCausland Memorial Community Centre, 1043 Community Centre Road, Gooderham from on Sunday, April 26, 2026 from 12:00 pm until 3:00 pm. A Masonic Service will be held at 1:00pm. Cremation has taken place.

Memorial Donations to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation (HHHSF) would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

In Loving Memory of

Marion Packard
(nee Scriver)

With deep love and gratitude for a life well lived, the family of Marion Packard announces her peaceful passing into the presence of the Lord on March 18, 2026, at the age of 94.

Born on February 12, 1932, in Hastings, Ontario, Marion was the middle child of the 5 children of Ernest and Isobell Scriver. She began her early years in Hastings Public School and later studied in Port Perry Public School, where her faith and values were shaped and deepened. A devoted follower of Christ, Marion lived out her faith daily through her kind and prayerful spirit. She served others with humility and grace, reflecting God's love in quiet but powerful ways. Marion found joy in oil and watercolour painting, sewing, and many other hobbies and cherished the blessings of faith, family, and community.

Predeceased by her spouse, Vernus Packard, and children Sheldon (Roseleen), Shermond (Sally), and Sheridonann, Dwaine Packard (Doreen), Gerald Packard (Helen). She is lovingly remembered by her son, Schennelly Stoughton (Sandra), daughter-in-law, Sally Stoughton, stepchildren, Sylvia Trumbull, Stanley Packard, James Packard and grandchildren, Amie Stoughton, Schennelly Stoughton Jr., Joshua Stoughton (Stephanie), Eddie Packard (Brenna), Lisa Root (Ashton), Amanda Stoughton, Kyle Stoughton (Laurel Greenwood) and many great-grandchildren. Her legacy of faith, love, and compassion will live on in the hearts of all who knew her.

Visitation & Funeral Service

Friends and family are invited to call on Tuesday, March 24, 2026, at 11:30 am at the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME**, 13523 Hwy. #118 Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0 (705) 457-9209 for a Service in Marion's honour. Visitation one hour prior. As an expression of sympathy, memorial donations can be made to a charity of your choice.

Community Funeral Home

In Loving Memory of

Michelle St. Pierre

August 4th 1956 - March 17th 2026.

Born in Toronto, Michelle grew up in the city's East End and attended Riverdale Collegiate. In her youth she worked a variety of jobs including at a poster shop, a medical office, and a bank's corporate headquarters. Her spare time was spent sailing and enjoying extended stays in Jamaica.

In her early 30's Michelle moved fulltime to the cottage in Gelert with her partner George Farrell. There she took several years off paid employment to raise her children. Upon returning to work her longest employers were Golden Stationers in Minden and the Rails End Gallery and Arts Centre in Haliburton. She volunteered for a number of local causes including the Haliburton County Fair and the Minden Library expansion. In her later years Michelle moved to Haliburton Village where she proudly went almost everywhere on foot.

Michelle loved to travel, visiting places such as Quebec, the Maritimes, Alberta, British Columbia, USA, Mexico, Portugal, Scotland, England, Denmark, Sweden, Italy, Austria, Slovakia, and Hungary.

Michelle was a voluminous reader, staunch feminist, political left-winger, keen art collector, skilled knitter, and an incredible cook. She was compassionate yet tough as nails.

Following a recent cancer diagnosis Michelle died on March 17th. Michelle is predeceased by parents Hazel and Martin, brother Joseph, partner George, and parents-in-law Jean and Stan. She is survived by sons Brendan and Tyson, cousins Jan and Paul, aunt Collette, uncles Jack and Don, niece Channel, and great-niece Monique.

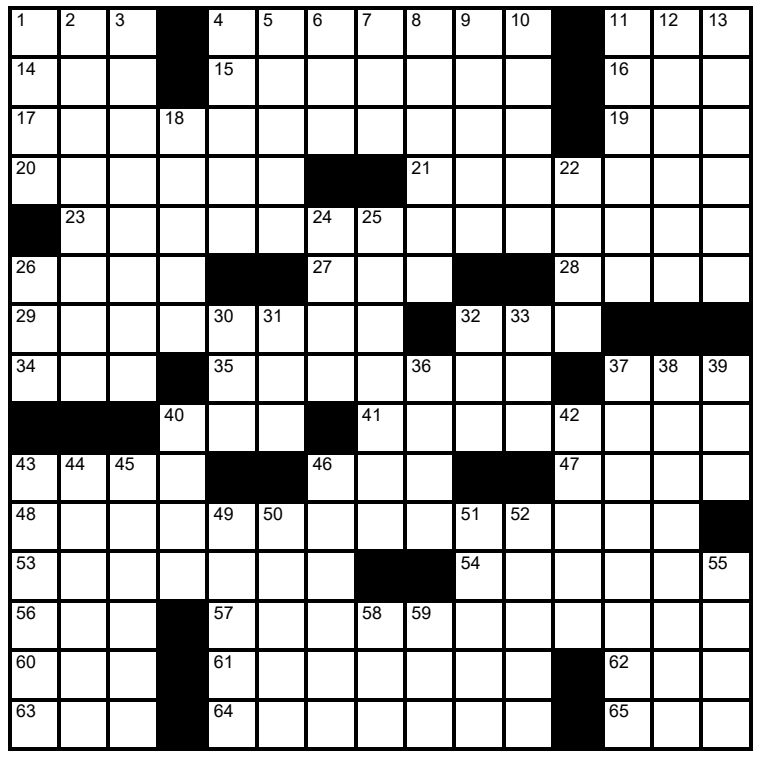
Cremation has taken place. Donations can be made to the Rails End Gallery and Arts Centre and The Haliburton Highlands Land Trust.

BUSINESS CLASSIFIEDS $29
CLASSIFIEDS $9

Highlander puzzles

Seeing Double

by Barbara Olson
© ClassiCanadian Crosswords



Across

1 Some personal ad specs
4 Targets for delivery
11 Semi sitting area
14 "What's this then!"
15 At-home diagnostic aid
16 Silent communication syst.
17 Helsinkian actor's delivery?
19 Aqua-coloured, in Italy
20 Fiery felonies
21 More caffeinated, maybe?
23 Barista's evening meal?
26 Nutrient in oysters
27 Corp. market debut
28 "___ with my little eye"
29 Grant royal authority
32 Baseball club?
34 "Alter" follower
35 "Gesundheit" or "Doppelgänger," e.g.?
37 God's pronoun
40 "___ bin ein Berliner" (J.F.K. quote)
41 On a phishing expedition
43 Tobogganed, say
46 Little kiss, in Québecois
47 TSN topics: Abbr.
48 Nacho dip made from wreath boughs?
53 Eager to hear
54 Like a Skycam view
56 "___ for Rocket" (Bradbury story)
57 Ocean destination for cake lovers?
60 "Harper Valley ___"
61 Heist helper
62 Sporty Audi models
63 Vocalized viewpoint
64 It's hotter than a jalapeno
65 Bluenose pronoun

Down

1 Parlour piece
2 ___ dervish
3 Big name in GMO agriculture
4 Brief stretch of work
5 "Steppenwolf" author Hermann
6 Uncertain ending?
7 Bakkers' "The ___ Club"
8 Instructor on the slopes
9 Having prongs
10 "Liar Liar" actress Cheri
11 Woodsy lodgings
12 Inactive, as a PC window
13 Like an eye chart's last line, maybe
18 Axe mark
22 Furrow, as a brow
24 Twain's Huck
25 Far offshore area
26 Z, in Alaska
30 Toronto-based fin. giant
31 "Impressive!"
32 Drag show scarf
33 It's loaded with cash
36 1300, in ancient Rome
37 Target group rosters?
38 "... sickness and" follower
39 Pill measurements: Abbr.
40 Eric of Monty Python
42 New Zealand indigene
43 Musical #s
44 Controversial Nabokov novel
45 "You got that right!"
46 Big smoocher
49 Classic Seinfeld-isms
50 Loon look-alike
51 "Billy the Kid" composer Copland
52 Montreal subway
55 ___-majesté (treason)
58 Narrow nav. passage
59 "When'll you be here?"

Looking for ladies that played soft-ball multiple years from 1960-89!

The Haliburton County Ladies Softball League are being honoured in the Haliburton County Hall of Fame!

Please contact me if you played and can attend. **Induction is 2pm, May 23rd.**
Also looking for action shots, please send to: **cheryl_greg4@hotmail.com**

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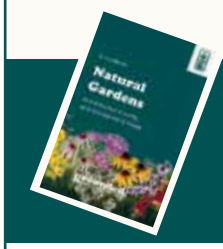

For a free guide to natural gardens in Haliburton County, visit groundedgardens.ca.

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Finding your happy place starts with knowing where to look. Browse our latest properties and work with a team that understands the Haliburton market inside and out.

2026 MARKET OUTLOOK

As we settle into the start of 2026, We've been doing a lot of reflecting on the year behind us. The Haliburton market has officially transitioned into a buyer's market, moving away from the frantic pace of previous years toward a more cautious and strategic environment.

2025 Retrospective: A Shifting Landscape

- **Inventory Surge:** Listings spiked as COVID-era owners sold due to rising carrying costs and stricter short-term rental (STR) regulations.
- **Pricing Softening:** While waterfront remains the premier asset, average sale prices have begun to ease.
- **A Slower Pace:** Buyers are taking more time to decide, forcing sellers to recalibrate their price expectations.

2026 Outlook: Trends to Watch

- **Record-High Inventory:** A "double wave" of new 2026 listings and unsold 2025 carryover is expected to create the highest inventory levels in over a decade.
- **Sideline Buyers Return:** Stabilizing Bank of Canada rates are expected to bring cautious buyers back into the market.
- **Strategic Pricing is Vital:** In a high-volume market, accurate pricing is the most critical factor for a successful sale.
- **The Spring Advantage:** Baumgartner Realty Group anticipates a seasonal uptick in demand, advising sellers to list early to capture motivated "first-wave" buyers.

RESIDENTIAL SALES

2024 **544 SALES** → 2025 **470 SALES**

14%

NEW LISTINGS

2024 **1419 LISTINGS** → 2025 **1516 LISTINGS**

6.8%

AVERAGE SALE PRICE

NON-WATERFRONT

2024 **$426,911** → 2025 **$397,497**

7.4%

WATERFRONT

2024 **$878,633** → 2025 **$811,671**

8.25%

**Data researched from the OnePoint Association of Realtors as of February 9, 2026*

CONTACT LINDA FOR A COMPLIMENTARY EQUITY & PRICING REVIEW (NO PRESSURE, JUST REAL NUMBERS)

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Broker of Record
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baumgartnerrealty.ca

SCAN TO VIEW LISTINGS